Sale of underweighed item

†1747. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that the sale of underweighed items has become order of the day;

(b) if so, whether Government have launched any campaign to stop this;

(c) the action taken at present against the persons/companies resorting to underweighing; and

(d) whether such actions are adequate to deter them from committing such crime?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) A news item published in the Tribune recently under the caption "underweight ghee and oil packets being openly sold: Consumer" was brought to the notice of the Depatment.

(b) and (c) Immediately, an intensive inspection campaign for protecting the interest of consumers was launched through out the country to detect underweight articles and take action against the violators as per the provisions of the Standards of Weights and Measures Act, 1976 and the Standards of Weight and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 1977. During inspections, representatives of Voluntary Consumer Organizations were also associated to provide transparency and also create a greater awareness among the consumers. 686 cases were booked against defaulters as on date.

(d) It has been reported that no subsequent case of repeat offence has been observed.

Pesticides in mineral water

1748. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether any licenses of Mineral Water Companies were cancelled after pesticides were found in bottled mineral water;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government found it fit to cancel all old licenses of mineral water companies and asked them to apply for fresh licenses after formulation of fresh standards;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI V. SREENIVASA PRASAD): (a) and (b) No, Sir. No licence has been cancelled so far on the basis of failure of sample of Packaged Drinking Water and Packaged Natural Mineral Water in pesticide residues.

(c) to (e) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has issued a Gazette Notification GSR 554(E) dated 18th July, 2003 *vide* which the maximum residue limit of pesticide residues has been prescribeds in case in Packaged Drinking Water as per IS:14543:1998. The notification will be effective from 1st January, 2004. Accordingly, an amendment No. 6 of October, 2003 has been issued by BIS to the Indian Standards Specification IS:14543:1998 to bring it in line with the above notification of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Accordingly, all the existing licenses have been informed by BIS on 13th August, 2003 for taking appropriate action including ensuring the conformity of their product ot revised norms of pesticide residues. BIS has already started verification process to ensure the conformity of the products of its licensees to revised norms of pesticide residues for permitting continuation of their licences beyond 31st December, 2003.

Functioning of PDS

1749. PROF. M. SANKARALINGAM: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made by Government to improve the functioning of PDS in terms of quality of items supplied, prices, etc; and

(b) the details of the items distributed through the PDS, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SUBHASH MAHARIA): (a) Foodgrains issued to the State Government/UTs for